



E-MANUAL



The Newsletter of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, MN

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Little Yellow Chick (Pintinho amarelinho)

At our fall retreat Talent Show Helena Moreira sang a song for us in Portuguese. The translation is listed here. If you would like to hear the song again in Portuguese I’m sure Helena would be happy to sing it.

My little yellow chick
That fits in my hand
When he wants to eat little bugs
He scratches the ground
He bats his wings
He says "piu piu"
But he is afraid of the big hawk.

EMC’s Student Financial Aid Plan

Our denominationally affiliated

institutions of higher education were established at great sacrifice by visionary leaders who understood that training future church leaders was a goal of utmost importance and urgency in a world and culture that was rapidly changing. Their foresight and commitment were well placed, for change now continues at a pace that could not have been imagined at that time.

When Emmanuel began in 1996, the number of youngsters in our group and the cost of higher education made it abundantly clear that we needed to be serious about providing assistance to our high school graduates in order to make attending our denominational schools a possibility. As a result the Student Financial Aid Plan was approved by the congregation in 1999. The goals of the plan were stated as follows:

As a congregation, we

- affirm our belief in the distinct value of Christian education in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition,
- encourage our members to pursue Christian education at our Mennonite schools,
- are determined to eliminate financial disability as the barrier preventing an individual from enrolling at one of our Mennonite or Mennonite Brethren post-secondary schools,
- wish to promote a spirit of sharing and servanthood in our congregation, and
- want to give our young people further opportunity to learn about and appreciate the Anabaptist/Mennonite vision.

The intent was to fund the plan by means of the annual budget and designated offerings so as to provide aid to current applicants as well as to build financial resources for future needs. Since its



inception, the plan has contributed almost \$72,000 to 10 students. While that sounds like an impressive amount, a casual inventory of our youth will quickly show that our current reserves of about \$30,000 will likely be highly inadequate.

I am deeply concerned about the potential shortfall in the resources of the Plan to adequately assist our current & future students at our denominational colleges/ universities, so I am challenging you to designate a monthly contribution to the Student Financial Aid Plan. The amount doesn't have to be great to make an impact (of course, more is better); ten people contributing \$10/month would add 30% to the currently budgeted amount.

I am making that pledge, I hope that you will join me in a most worthy cause.

Ernest Miller

A Book Report: *Son of Hamas* by Mosab Hassan Yousef, 2010 251p

Submitted by Jack Janzen

The book is now in the church library.



If this book had been submitted to a publisher as a work of fiction it would have been rejected as too improbable. Yousef grew up as a Muslim in Palestine the son of an Imam who was in the Hamas leadership from the early days of the organization. Because of his father's position he got a good view of the Hamas organization as well as automatically being a participant. Then when he was persuaded to be an undercover agent for Israel and later when he decided to become a Christian things really get interesting. The book falls into several categories—as a history of Hamas-Palestine history during the late 1990s through the mid 2000s; as a biography of a young boy in Palestine; as a spy thriller and as a faith story of how Yousef converted from Islam to Christianity.

Yousef's father did not start out as a militant, violent man and indeed during this book did not actively participate in violent Hamas activities. Actually he spent much of the time in

Israeli prisons. Yousef, like many young boys growing up in Palestine, got crosswise with the Israeli police and also landed in jail. While in prison he was “turned” by the Israeli Shin Bet, Israel's equivalent of the FBI, to be an undercover spy for Israel. During that time he was able to undermine Hamas on several occasions and keep his father safe during that part of the story—not an easy accomplishment.

During the period as an undercover agent he encountered some Missionaries from the UK at a street corner (ironically near the Damascus gate) in Jerusalem who invited him in to a Bible study. He started attending Bible study meetings and reading the Bible on his own. The gospels resonated with him in a way that the Koran and Islam did not. He was especially struck by the sermon on the mount and Jesus teaching that we should love our enemy. This helped him resolve his internal conflict of working with the Israelis and being loyal to his people. Christ taught that he could love them both.

I don't want to spoil the more interesting parts of the book but Yousef did meet Arafat several times. He offers an explanation as to why the Camp David accords of 2000 with Clinton, Arafat and Barak failed. He lays the blame squarely on Arafat describing him as a reverse Robin Hood who stole from the poor to enrich himself.

As an undercover agent for Israel in Palestine, Yousef was living on the edge. After a few years working undercover he, understandably, wanted out. He was able to persuade his Shin Bet handlers to help him defect to the United States where he now lives in Southern California.

Humor And Horror In Job

by Pastor Mathew Swora

“If he were truly a righteous man, and so important to the community, then I would give him some of my cows.”

That's what most any cattle herder of the Fulani tribe, spread across the western half of Sub-

Saharan Africa, would likely say if you told him the story of Job, in the Old Testament, who lost nearly everything in a trial with Satan (1:8-12). If you asked why he would be so generous to a stricken man, he might say, “Because the community is only as strong as its weakest link. If a righteous, generous man like Job loses everything, who then will help us when it’s our turn to face catastrophe?” Then that cattle herder might recount just how a friend or neighbor like Job, or any one of his or her ancestors twenty-five generations back, helped some of his ancestors. He could probably also explain how his family and the righteous saint whom he has in mind are related by marriage and blood, even if quite a few generations ago. It would probably take something like an electrical diagram to map it out, and would involve a lot of “grands” and “greats” and “in-laws” and hyphens, but such connections are the very essence of culture and survival for almost all agrarian and herding societies like that of Job.

Should you go on to recount how Job also lost his children (1:18-20), the man would shake his head, click his tongue, and say, “Then I would send him one of my children to help him out, and I would get my brothers to do the same.” As strange as that might sound to Western ears, it’s common in much of the Two-Thirds World for people to spend significant parts of their youth living with and helping out their aunts or uncles or cousins twice-removed, as family needs change. Family of my family’s family, however distant the connection, is still family, and we have obligations toward each other dating back generations.

Other reasons for helping a disaster victim like Job would include honor: the honor of honoring an honored person who has likely honored you or your family in the past. Helping such an honored and honoring man surely increases your own honor and blessing. This is not just for personal ego’s sake. In such societies, living on the edge of survival, when all other riches and currencies fail or lose value, honor remains the last and most potent commodity of exchange. Not only then is Job undergoing a test of faith and integrity, so is his community. Whether they pass the test and inherit

blessing, depends upon whether and how they help him, or not.



That’s an aspect of *Job* that Western readers usually miss: the test of faith and integrity in his community. While Job passes the test, his community fails miserably. Their spokespersons, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, got the religious words and ideas down pat, so eloquently and beautifully, too, but not the required actions. Job’s three “comforters” started out right, by “sitting shiva” with him in silence for a week after his catastrophic bereavements. But it all went downhill when they opened up their mouths and did nothing but. Then begins the debate at the heart of Job, between his “comforters,” who seek to pry out of Job what he did to deserve his sufferings, and Job himself, who insists on his integrity, and laments his losses to God.

I suspect that Job’s comforters/accusers lend elements of humor and horror to the drama, all the more for their poetic and oratorical powers. When *Job* was composed, poetry and drama were the equivalent of Lights! Camera! Action! and special effects. The thrills we get today at the movies, from smash-flash-whiz-bang action sequences, can be just as strong in oral societies with a delicious turn of phrase, verbal rhythms and rhyming, imagery, irony, pathos, love, wit and wisdom. We haven’t entirely lost these delights in our digital age. Such verbal “special effects” continue with some rap artists and some of their work (not all, definitely), Country-Western music (with such logically startling but perceptive titles like “You Can Feel Bad If It Makes You Feel Better” by Patti Loveless) and in the “poetry slams” that you can attend at many coffee shops. The Bible is full of such memorable and striking poetic flourishes and fireworks, and one doesn’t have to know Hebrew or Greek to catch or enjoy them all. Jesus was the master of such oratorical “hooks,” as in his doublet, “straining out gnats and swallowing camels.” Don’t think too long about that image before a meal. Or do, if you’re trying to lose weight.

Here’s where the horror and humor may

enter in *Job*: While the audience is being treated to delicious poetic flourishes and fireworks from Job and his comforters, and while his comforters are *saying* all the right things, they are so busy declaiming and defending God that they are actually and ironically disobeying and defaming God, by not *doing* the right things. Questions like, “So when are you going to give Job some of your cows? Or children? As a righteous man, didn’t he do that for you?” may be in the backs of the audiences’ minds.

But the questions won’t stay there. The irony between the piety and poetry, on one hand, and the damning negligence, self-serving and injustice of Job’s comforters might start out as funny. But the tension rises to horror as the debate continues, their action stalls, and Job continues to suffer. As Job’s comforters get more insistent in their piety and their logic (“You must have done *something* to deserve this, Job”), the audience is getting prepared for Job’s comforters to get their come-uppance when God shows up to vindicate Job (ch. 42:7ff), not them, and to do for Job what they should have done for him all along: to give him new livestock, new family and a new start. By neglecting to honor Job as he had likely honored them in their times of trouble, his comforters lost honor and garnered shame from the Source of all honor, the Owner of “all cattle on a thousand hills (Ps. 50:10).”

Why were they so clueless, when they were also so pious? Whenever catastrophe strikes, there is another force at work beside love and honor: fear. We want life to make sense, so we fear the moral and logical anarchy of random, senseless, unmerited suffering. Furthermore, we can’t help but wonder, Could it happen to me? The easiest way to make sense of such suffering and loss, and to avoid them, we think, is to say that they are deserved. And that could mean that anyone who draws near to a sufferer like Job in sympathy or aid could risk getting fried by the same divine lightning strike of justice. Instead of helping Job out, and possibly sharing his guilt, we must find out what he did, so that we don’t put ourselves at risk of the same catastrophe. We must join what surely must

be the heavenly chorus of accusations against the sufferer, and so be found on the right side. Thus we add the insult of scapegoating onto the injury of unmerited suffering.

In all loss and suffering, whether it’s the immediate and overwhelming catastrophe of a Hurricane Katrina, or the slowly rolling, long-enduring loss of employment or health, the community is being tested at least as much as the sufferers. Will the community draw back in fear and add estrangement and judgment onto the victim’s suffering, or will it draw near in love, to honor and support the victims? One could make pious-sounding theological cases for either side, especially since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).” But at the end of *Job*, God takes a clear and definite side in the argument between fear and love: when in doubt, resist the temptation to draw back, run away, blame the victim and shoot the wounded. God is not looking to be defended, but befriended, in his labor of setting the world right. Instead, rush in to help, to give honor, aid and support, with more than just words. Because we’re all in this together.

Our Vision, Jesus’ Vision From Missions & Service Leadership by Philip Friesen

The leader’s job is to go before the troop. The leader needs to see the destination clearly while those who follow just need to keep the leader in sight. Certainly this was the case for Jesus.

John the Baptist had preached a prophetic vision of justice and right relationships to the Jews. There were a thousand social ills that needed to be addressed, and John had a prescription for recovery, as we read in both Mathew 3 and Luke 3, but even John’s social vision was naïve about both the depth of the problem and the cost of repairing the broken system. It would require someone much greater than John to effect the needed changes.

It is easy to fall back to a John the Baptist

vision. John prescribed specific actions that should result in improvement—sharing your extra coat with a poor person, bringing honesty into government and business, and reducing violence against the population, but those actions, while positive, still failed to address the regime change Jesus saw in the future. That would only come by the cross. In John 12 when some foreigner visitors came looking for Jesus, Jesus wasn't flattered by their attention or the great opportunity they presented for expanding his influence and giving him an international reputation. He could talk about nothing but the cross.

Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." He didn't explain the road map. While following Jesus along the way the disciples did heal some people and cast out some demons, and in Acts some poor people were fed, thanks to Barnabas and a few others like him.

We invariably want a road map, but God never gives us a road map. God calls us, as he did Abraham, to go to a place he will show us. God showed us the Phillips neighborhood. Now that we are here, what do we do? (Don't feel bad. Abraham had the same problem.)

Following Jesus is not for fainthearted, fearful, or timid people. Some, like Barnabas, may be called to cash in their securities and others, like Peter and Paul, spend time in jail. Who knows where we may be led? Jesus has a unique path for us that will unfold as we follow.

Like Jesus, Pastor Mathew has showed us how we need to get out among our neighbors and be with them. He and Becky live in Phillips and minister, not just to Emmanuelites, but to the neighbors as well, yet still not losing touch with the needs of distant lands. As chair of Missions and Service Commission at Emmanuel, I hope all of us in leadership will find ways to follow the example being set.

Isaiah 30:21: And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left." For New Testament believers the way is the way of the cross. At this Lenten season, let's be

ready to carry the cross wherever He may lead us.



Save the Date

**As part of our 20 year celebration
Join us on Monday, May 20th!**

This year marks Urban Ventures' 20 year anniversary and we want YOU to be a part of it by joining our Annual Urban Golf Classic! We will be returning to the beautiful course at **MN Valley Country Club** and are excited for another beautiful day!

It's never too early to start thinking of who will be part of your foursome. So mark **Monday, May 20th** on your calendar and get ready for a good time!

Schedule of Events

- 10:30am - Registration
- 11:30am - Lunch
- 12:00pm - Program
- 12:30pm - Shotgun Start
- 5:30pm - 20th Hole



Please contact Sarah Spiegle with questions sarahspiegle@urbanventures.org
612-638-1004



EMC Needs YOU!!!

Are you looking for a way to get involved at Emmanuel but don't want to be up front? Why not help out by opening the building and getting it ready to worship on Sunday mornings? A brief description of what is expected is below. If you're interested, please contact Karen Schrock, kschrock@emmanuelmennonitechurch.com.

- | Setup |
|--|
| • Unlock/lock doors |
| • Turn on/off lights |
| • Open/close windows as necessary |
| • Empty trash baskets after education hour |
| • Dump trash in bin across Columbus Avenue |
| • Additional duties in winter |
| ◦ Turn up thermostat |
| ◦ shovel walks/stairs and salt them |